

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 HA-05 L-03
H-01 SCS-06 CA-01 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00
/063 W
-----075960 210058Z /45

R 191455Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4528
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PRAGUE 0152

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, CGEN, SHUM, CZ
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE BLANKET PARDON FOR SOME CZECHOSLOVAK EMIGRES

1. CANADIAN CONOFF REPORTED TO EMBASSY JANUARY 18 COMMENTS MADE TO HIM BY THE CONSULAR DIVISION CHIEF OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (HOZVICKA) CONCERNING A POSSIBLE BLANKET PARDON FOR CERTAIN CZECHOSLOVAK EMIGRES. DURING A ROUTINE CALL, HOZVICKA ADVISED THAT THOSE CZECHOSLOVAK CITIZENS RESIDENT IN CANADA WHO HAVE BEEN CHARGED WITH THE "CRIME" OF "ILLEGAL EMIGRATION", AND WHO CONSEQUENTLY MUST SEEK A PRESIDENTIAL PARDON, SHOULD MAKE AN EFFORT TO OBTAIN SUCH A PARDON BEFORE FEBRUARY 25.

2. HOZVICKA, REFUSING TO STATE WITH CERTAINTY THAT THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT IS CONTEMPLATING ANY ACTION WHATEVER, STRESSED THAT THE PROCESSING BY PRESIDENT HUSAK'S OFFICE OF PARDON REQUESTS (HE MUST SIGN OFF ON THEM PERSONALLY) IS OCCASIONING A BUREAUCRATIC OVERLOAD. HE NOTED, AS HE HAD ON A PREVIOUS OCCASION, THAT THE GOC WOULD MAKE AN ANNOUNCEMENT CONCERNING "ILLEGAL EXILES" ON ONE OF ITS 1978 ANNIVERSARIES. IN THIS CONNECTION, HOZVICKA ADVISED THAT PERSONS WISHING TO OBTAIN A PARDON SHOULD SEE TO IT THAT THEIR
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NOTARIZED REQUESTS REACH PRAGUE BY FEBRUARY 25, THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COMMUNISTS' ACCESSION TO POWER. HE ADVISED THAT APPLICANTS MAIL THESE PETITIONS DIRECTLY TO THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH HOZVICKA REFUSED TO BE PINNED DOWN, IT WOULD APPEAR THAT SOMETHING IS PLANNED FOR FEBRUARY 25, POSSIBLY A BLANKET PARDON OF ALL THOSE EMIGRES WHO HAVE BY THAT DATE MADE FORMAL

APPLICATION. IF SO, THE PARTY-STATE LEADERSHIP IS DOUBTLESS
MOTIVATED IN LARGE PART BY DESIRE TO IMPROVE ITS IMAGE DOMESTICALLY
ON THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY AS WELL AS INTERNATIONALLY--ESPECIALLY AT
THE BELGRADE TALKS, WHERE GOC REPRESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS
HAS BEEN SO STRONGLY CONDEMNED. SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT
MEAN BLANKET "NORMALIZATION" FOR SUCH PERSONS BUT RATHER ONLY
THE REMOVAL OF ONE OF THE STEPS IN THAT PROCESS. IT WOULD HAVE
SIGNIFICANCE FOR EMIGRES IN THE UNITED STATES ONLY IN THOSE CASES
IN WHICH THE EMIGRES HAVE NOT YET BECOME CITIZENS, HAVE BEEN PROSECUTED

IN ABSENTIA FOR THEIR EMIGRATION, AND ARE SEEKING TO AVAIL THEMSELVES
OF THE "NORMALIZATION" PROGRAM. IF ANY SUCH CASE COMES TO THE
DEPARTMENT'S ATTENTION, IT MAY WISH TO ADVISE THE PERSONS CONCERNED
TO SEEK A PARDON AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. EMBASSY WILL SEEK FURTHER
DETAILS AND REPORT THEM PROMPTLY.

DECONTROL AFTER FOUR YEARS FROM ORIGINATING DATE.
BYRNE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMNESTY, EMIGRANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRAGUE00152
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780031-0857
Format: TEL
From: PRAGUE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780145/aaaablpo.tel
Line Count: 80
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 93e53be2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3747597
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE BLANKET PARDON FOR SOME CZECHOSLOVAK EMIGRES
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, CGEN, SHUM, CZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/93e53be2-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014